

# NO More Excuses!

'Health conscious' is one way I would like to describe myself but I have to admit it is more than a challenge. I get lazy, snitch the wrong foods, and make excuses upon excuses. Time to lounge began to take precedence over exercise. Then came along a worksite wellness 'pedometer walking challenge'. I liked to walk and trot so I agreed to take on this challenge. At first, it was hard to remember to wear the pedometer, but I soon learned to count those steps. It was slow starting. I got a boost with a couple of visits to Chicago (where I walked all over that exciting city). But, I was still finding the excuse of being too busy, having too much homework to do, and just being way too tired.

The turning point finally hit me. Not only was I making up excuses, my health began to suffer. I was battling high blood pressure and gaining unwanted weight. These were things I had always controlled with regular exercise and eating better. I entered the danger zone -- a wake up call. I started taking this walking challenge more seriously. A good friend of mine told me about the walking marathon that she did, and how she was in the best shape of her life when she trained for that. Hmmm. What a concept! I can be in shape by walking and I like to walk; so I figured I just needed to commit to the challenge, and I mean really commit.

I joined my husband in eating healthier, and he joined me in walking 4 miles every night. In 2 month's time I managed to:

- lose some weight,
- be in better shape,
- AND control my blood pressure



**EXERCISE NOW TAKES PRECEDENCE AND IS A PRIORITY IN MY LIFE.** I obtained my goal of a master's degree, so I truly have more time to commit to leading a healthier lifestyle. Not only am I walking, I jog two miles each morning and 3 miles on the weekends. When I realized the number of steps I take in a week's time (what a surprise) with all this activity, I am more confident in reaching a bigger goal. The ultimate goal I am aiming or is to WALK A MARATHON. I know if I can keep up the pace I can complete 26.2 miles - a FULL marathon. It seems like a lot of walking, **yet it's all for the health of it and it's working.**

Submitted by a fellow state employee